1: Raswan T-3 (1913-35) 1947 MD4 Rwala MD4

726 Our leader slipped from his *dhalul* and called back joyously: "Jirad ibn Jeneyb!" It was one of the *shiyukhs* of the Beni Sakhr, and an old acquaintance of Faris.

726 619 In a trice the Beni Sakhr broke cover and pressed about us. We were deluged with questions as they led us to their camp, a few hours' distant. On the way Faris told them of the capture of a scout of their tribe and of our peaceable journey of inquiry into their grazing-grounds. Ever and again Ibn Jeneyb protested that the Beni Sakhr were at "unclouded peace" with the Ruala and that the captured spy must be a robber and an outcast from the tribe, who wanted to plunder the Ruala on his own account.

[486] When we had dismounted in his camp, Ibn Jeneyb had a camel slaughtered before our eyes. A slave caught its blood in a bowl. He then tore up a bunch of herbs, dipped it in the blood, and with this brush painted the tribal emblem on the necks and flanks of our riding-camels. This was to serve, as it were, as a guarantee of our peaceful intentions and as a safe conduct among the rest of the Beni Sakhr.

A small detachment of them were still pursuing Bedouins of the northwestern lava region, who had broken into the Wadi Sirhan and, the day before, had fallen on Beni Sakhr herders, grazing their camels. The raiders lost one dead—it was his corpse we had found—while the Beni Sakhr had two men wounded.

●763 I visited these wounded men and found one of them, with two ghastly bullet wounds in his chest and abdomen, lying at the point of death. I did my best to save him—I had my case of surgical instruments, mor-

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●763 phine and bandages with me—but it was too late to help. I could do no more than ease his last hours by alleviating his pain. He could not have been over forty. Friends carried him presently the short distance to Ibn Jeneyb's 763 tent and laid him down there. Then a slave led up a 231 handsome riding-camel. It was touching to see how the intelligent animal seemed to sense that its master was dying. It caressed him repeatedly, and with large, anxious eyes circled round, touching the strange men with its slit lips and its soft silky nostrils.

The dying man was speaking to Ibn Jeneyb, his chieftain, when a severe hæmorrhage caused him to faint. When he came to again, he whispered some words to the slave; and before I could take in what was happening, the Negro, bending back the camel's head, killed it with a lightning plunge of his dagger into the jugular vein.

Other slaves immediately skinned the animal and spread out the hide, the bloody side up, before the tent. Then they undressed the dying man and laid him on it. His last wish had been to be buried in the skin of his cherished *dhalul*, and the thought that his wish was to be realized made him happy as he lay dying. But I was not the only one to regret the purposeless death of the splendid animal.

When, toward evening, the man had breathed his last, four or five of the watchers, his friends, got up, one after another, and lightly touched his forehead with their finger-tips. Ibn Jeneyb, who knelt beside the dead man, put his hand under his left armpit; after a while he called out: "In truth, he is cold!"

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763 [764] Getting up hastily, he folded the wet, bloody winding-sheet over the corpse and directed his slaves to dig a grave for him in the sand. Without ceremony or any show of emotion, it was borne away and given into the keeping of the earth.

619 After parting from the Beni Sakhr, we moved back by slow marches toward the hill lands of Bir Hausa, which abound in game.

At the wells we fell in with camel-riders watering a herd. They were Sharrarat, and friendly to the Ruala—luckily, as it turned out. They helped us to draw water from the holes fifty feet deep; and in the evening we withdrew with them into the protecting hills, camping in a rocky hollow, with sentries posted on the black pinnacles. The stars sparkled down on us as we ate supper. [262] It consisted of the roasted flesh of a camel calf, very tender, crisp bread-cakes and fresh camel milk, followed by the customary "dessert" of dates mixed with sour sheep butter. It was after midnight before we rolled up in our cloaks, each man with his loaded carbine under his head. For we did not completely trust the Sharrarat, even though we had eaten and drunk together and they lived under Nuri Sha'lan's "heel." But the night passed peacefully, and on the morrow, after we had exchanged trifling presents, we bade good-bye to our hosts.

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000 the men's rifles, revolvers, and ammunition. They all had been slaves of Rakan.

Meanwhile, it had become nearly dark. My eyes strayed to the tragic vehicle loaded with our dead and with Faris, as I thought, lying beside it, perhaps dying. Still and ghostlike it loomed in the gloaming. But, was I dreaming? Faris, whom we had left lying on the ground unconscious, was sitting in the front of our car!

He raised his hand and waved it at us! It was no hallucination! I left Mijhem standing there and ran to Faris.

When I sat down beside him, he slowly extended his right arm and laid it over my shoulder. So he leaned on me; and we rested awhile, side by side. I had switched on the lights on our instrument-board, and a faint glow fell on his pallid face. A sickly, sweet odour came from his blood-soaked garments. He tried to speak, but he was in much pain and could barely draw his bloodless lips away from his teeth.

When Mijhem had come back, we made ready to get under way. With some trouble we got our engine going. One of our head-lamps still worked and could be lighted; the other one had been shot to pieces.

•763 I wanted to drive Faris straight to Damascus, where there was a number of French surgeons, one of whom I knew. But he only shook his head and begged us to carry him to his family and Tuēma. He was convinced he had only a short time to live and that no physician could help him.

I, too, had little hope of his recovery and ceased to persuade, feeling loath to assume the responsibility for

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his death far from his kin and without having seen his beloved one again.

"If we go now," said Faris, with pleading voice, "God will extend my time so that I may see Tuēma, and take her as my wife. And so I shall raise a 'name' to honour my father's house, even if it please God to take me away."

Faris—the true Ishmaelite!

Bedouins (and for that matter the Wahabees also) do not honour the tombs of their dead, but they revere the wombs of the living as blessed.

So we resolved to do the will of Faris. But, before setting our faces homeward, we drove to the Saba car and its three dead. We removed a good tyre and some parts, which Mijhem thriftily thought could be put to use, and also poured most of its petrol into our tank. What remained Mijhem splashed over the car and then set fire to it. As we drove away into the night, this funeral pyre lit up the dark desert and its unseen horrors.

We drove slowly and carefully,—it was morning when we came in sight of the Ruala camp.

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XX

"The Cloud in My Eyes"

●763 THE SUN HAD just risen when, from a ridge, we saw the black tents in the valleys between gently undulating hills. Some camel herds were already stringing out to pasture. I stopped the car and we looked at the peaceful scene spread out before us. The world could not be more beautiful than it was that morning.

On Faris's face lay the same still light that glorified the land. His eyes shone as with the gleam of a new light; and I was happy to bring him home.

To-day he looked on everything with the eyes of one about to say farewell. What at other times he hardly noticed, to-day he regarded with wonder, as if he saw it for the first time.

He asked me if I thought that the "other" life would be like this earthly one.

"Yes!" I replied. "But it is a life of peace and not of strife."

He looked at his bloodless hands. "Once upon a time they were strong," he said, "but now no strength is left in them. They are yellow like ripe seed. They will be laid in the earth." He looked into my face and said earnestly in a low voice: "Let us go to Tuēma."

As we made our way through the camp of the tribal division to which Faris belonged, a grave-faced throng pressed round our car and in silence accompanied it to his father's dwelling. Supported only by me and holding

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763 his head high, Faris dragged himself from the car to the tent. He would show no weakness. But the deathly pallor of his face betrayed his sad condition. There were also Mnahi's wound-dressings and the shot-riddled car to tell their tale. But though hundreds crowded close, grown-ups and children, and looked at us with anxious and inquiring eyes, not a mouth was opened to put a question. The very dogs, usually so joyful and vociferous on the return of a party, were silent; they only snuffed the blood-stained car, laid back their ears, and slunk off as if they had received a beating.

Faris's father, informed of the disaster by the word that had flown from tent-row to tent-row, came in gravely and sat down beside his stricken son. It cost him a terrible effort to preserve the appearance of composure prescribed by the Bedouin code. He made no inquiry as to his son's condition until after coffee had been handed round, and even then he could only ask, according to established usage: "God willing, Faris, mayst thou stay with us?"

"I am alive, Father, God be praised! And there is peace."

"Peace?" asked Naif and some others in obvious surprise.

"Ibn Meheyd proclaimed peace in the council of his *shiyukhs*. Yesterday he had already removed his herds to the northern grazing-grounds."

"Peace—peace!" The cry of "Peace" ran through the tent and swelled outside into a chorus—"There is peace—we may move on!"

Behind Faris knelt his little sister and the small sons

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763 of Tra'd ibn Sattam. Tears ran down the children's faces, but they bit their lips. Now our adventures were related, to the accompaniment of the free comments of the company. With incredible self-mastery, Faris, marked by death, sought to hide his sufferings and take part in the general conversation, which ran on and on. Every little detail of the fighting was threshed out in cold blood, and Faris's inevitable fate was discussed with (to anyone of the Western world) cruel disregard of his feelings.

This discussion lasted two hours. When the company finally rose, Faris also tried to get up; but a severe hæmorrhage threw him back on his couch, and he 763 fainted. His mother was sent for. When he came to, she 593 was kneeling at his side, with his hands in hers; and one could see she was hungering for a look from him. "My son!" she whispered, and kissed him, her face streaming with tears.

When Faris's still-wandering eyes saw her so convulsed with grief, his face quivered. "Who is this woman?" he said, propping himself on his elbow. "Take her away! I don't know her."

The slaves looked at one another uncertainly.

"Take her outside!" Faris called to them again. Then I took the poor woman by the arm and, with some words of consolation, led her from the tent. But at the entrance of the tent she wrenched herself from me, ran [782] back and threw herself at Faris's feet. With both hands she gathered dust from the ground and poured it on her head and cried to God to preserve her son.

Faris touched her bent head and said:

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"Go, Mother! God will give thee strength. I would have only happy faces about me. Nay, have I lived in order to be afraid of death?" 763 593

He motioned to me to lead his mother away.

When I came out of the woman's tent, a rider on a sorrel horse came galloping from another camp at the lower end of the valley and I waited. It was Tuëma, as I had thought. 763

Her whole body trembled and her voice was choked with tears. I tried to calm her and told her of what had passed between Faris and his mother. At this she pulled herself together and kissed my hands and pressed them to her wet eyes.

"What shall I do, Aziz?" she asked.

"Make his last hours cheerful, Tuëma. Show him that you are happy. That is all."

"Go thou before me," she begged, and tried to smile; but the tears rolled down her cheeks.

"Go before me," she repeated. "I want first to dispel the cloud from my eyes."

It had been decided that the marriage of Faris and Tuëma should take place that very evening. He had been inquiring after her with growing impatience. When I told him the glad news that Tuëma had come and would be with him at any moment, he begged first to see his mother again.

I went myself to the women's quarters to bring her. Her grief had made her a frail wraithlike creature: she walked with uncertain steps, but was more composed. She knelt down by Faris's couch. He put his arms round his beloved mother, and hugged her to his breast. Tears

1: Raswan T-3 (1913-35) 1947 MD4 Rwala MD4

763 came into his eyes and they seemed to soothe the mother's pain.

She sat bolt upright by her son's side, arranged his clothes and cushions and replaited his long, thick tresses, which some words of jest about him and his beloved Tuëma. When she had finished, she left again, leaning on my arm, and from the threshold called out to her son that she would now send in Tuëma.

We had arranged a broad comfortable couch for Faris and partitioned it off with curtains; but one of them, according to the direction of the wind, was always drawn back, so that Faris, resting with the upper part of his body propped up, could look out.

A smile of happiness mingled with surprise suddenly lit up his face. Tuëma had come in. She had paused at the threshold with a smothered cry and a look of horror in her face at her lover's helpless plight. But so quickly had she mastered herself that I hardly noticed her emotion, and Faris saw only a smiling face as she moved to his bedside. Her silver bangles tinkled faintly. "Faris! Faris! My Life!" she exclaimed, dropping on her knees; and, twining her arms about his neck, she stroked and caressed his face and body.

When she kissed him, I noticed that her mouth was stained with his blood; but she kept her lips firmly pressed to his, so that he should not see that blood was trickling from his mouth on to her neck.

585 Shortly before sundown the tent began to fill with relatives and friends, who had been invited as witnesses to the wedding.

2:Musil S-4,5 (no date)1928 MD4 Rwala MD4

CHAPTER XX

VENGEANCE

763

The report of a death or murder causes a stir not only in the camp but throughout the clan and even the whole tribe. The nearest female relatives of the dead person tear away the buckles holding their shirts under the neck, scratch their faces with their fingernails, besmear them with ashes and sand, cut off their braids above the temples, wind a narrow white kerchief, *ḳṭâṣa bêṣa*, around their heads, and run out of the camp either south or north into the desert, where they cry three times: "Ah, woe is me! O thou father of mine! *wa' wejla jâ-bujjâ*." Or: "Ah, woe is me! O thou little brother of mine! *wa' wejla jâ-ḫujjâ*." The white kerchief they wear on their heads for at least a month. This is called *kaffâl*.

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The men of the whole camp run out to the dead body, examine the wounds, and discuss the manner of death. Those who are not his kin on the father's side, *aǧnebânijje*, return to the camp, watch their tents, send out the news to the pasturing grounds and the nearest camps, and take care that neither they nor their herds come between the avengers and the culprits.

The guilt rests on the whole kin, *aḥl*, of the murderer; vengeance also becomes the duty of the whole kin of the dead man.[1]

AVENGERS AND PROTECTORS

The whole kin is bound to mutual protection, both aggressive and defensive, *jeṭred w-jentared*. The more distant relatives, i. e. those who are in the fourth and later generations from the ancestor common to themselves and the culprit, generally offer the avengers a two-year-old camel, *ḥeṭṭ*, and are left in peace.

The avengers are called violators, *aḥl as-saṭwa*, or those who carry on blood feud in defense of the culprits, *ṭallâbt addamm*, while the culprits are spoken of as the blood-stained, *damwijje, dâmijje*. The avenger proper is generally the nearest healthy adult relative of the murdered man; the first culprit

[1] See above, pp. 67—68.

2:Musil S-4, 5 (no date)1928 MD4 Rwala MD4

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course, has not yet washed himself, and such an unclean one, 758
neǧes, would make the wound still worse, *mustarfer*: The visitor 831
salutes with the words: "May thy evil disappear! *jizûl šarrak*." Or: "May it disappear and not come over thee any more! *jizûl w-lâ jîǧik*." To avoid informing the patient that he looks ill, [576]
and thus frightening him, the visitor says: "It seems to me thou hast a healthy color, perhaps nothing ails thee," the patient's reply usually being: "By Allâh himself, nothing is the matter with me, merely so and so."

If the patient gets worse, nobody must mourn. "We have 761
a soul, and he has a soul obeying Allâh. *ma'ana nesem w-* 777
ma'eh nesem taḥat allâh." The patient gets worse every Wednesday and Friday, for these are the heavy days, *jowm aṯ-ṯaḳîl*, for him. Likewise every sixth, sixteenth, and twenty-first day of the lunar month aggravates the condition of the patient and spreads the news of his illness, *mubajjeḥ al-ḫabar*.

A demoniac is called *mharfal*. As such they consider the 732
imbecile, the demented, and the insane. If he does not get well soon, he is fettered and allowed to perish of thirst.

If a mad dog, *ǒalb mṛalûṭ*, bites, *ji'azz*, a man, sulphur 752
is applied to the wound, which is then burned with a red-hot 758
nail. After forty days the injured person generally is stricken with rabies. Then they fetter him and throw hot ashes on his head until he dies.

In the case of a snake bite the soothsayer, *ḳarrâj*, is sent 752
for and cures the bitten man with his spittle. The *ḳarrâj* 755
learns this art from a member of the Rifâ'ijje Order at an-Nuḳra in the neighborhood of Damascus, paying one quarter of a *meǧîdijje* (22.5 cents) for tuition. No snake can harm a *ḳarrâj*.

Bites of scorpions and poisonous spiders are cured by wrapping the wounded limb in a raw skin or by laying the patient in an oblong pithole, the bottom of which is covered with camel manure thrown over camel urine, *'abas al-bel*. Then, covering the patient up to his head with clay or sand, they build a small fire at his side to make him sweat thoroughly. But to prevent him from falling asleep they shout at him: "O thou who has been bitten by an *'ankabût* spider, wilt thou live or wilt thou die?" He must answer: "I shall live, I shall live, not die."

A person seriously ill appoints a guardian for his young 763
children with the words: "O So-and-So, I do not know what 429

783 Allah will write to me, therefore, behold, I put my children and
429 my estate like the ring of a turtle dove's neck from my neck on thy neck. In the high station /before Allah/ I shall inquire of thee about them. "Ja flan ana ma-dri was allah jaktob 'alejji mar tara 'ejali w-halali towk hamamaten min rukubti birkubtak ansedk 'anhom bel-makez al-'asim."

The answer will be: "I shall take thy place. May Allah have mercy on thee. 'Ana lak bel-makan allah jarhamk."

In the absence of him whom he would lide to appoint as guardia the sick man will declare before one or two men: "O ye, X and Y, I ask you to witness that I put my children on the neck of So-and-So."

/567/ In the majority of cases the sick man prefers to appoint a faithful slave to the guardianship. Sometimes he also names the camels which are to go to one or other of his children and what she-camel he wishes to be sacrificed for him. However, any of his stipulations may be annulled by his first-born son. Neither the father nor the mother give their children any last advice.

DEATH

764 Water is dropped into a dying person's mouth without my words. They do not close the eyes of the dead, nor stop his nostrils, dead bodi
/767/ being carefully avoided by the Rwala. If they camp near a settlement, or some fellahin happen to be with them at the time, they hire them t bury the dead. Rubbing the body over with a wet cloth, they wrap it in its shirt, or when that is torn they lay it on a piece of white linen, cover it with the same material, then sew both pieces in three places, load the body thus enshrouded on a mule and carry it to the grave. This must be deeper for a woman than for a man. Its depth for a woman must be such that even the breast could not be seen if the body were placed upright; for the man its depth is only to his knees when in a standing posture. A stone is put under the head and the body is laid invariably with its right side downwards and facing south. Covering it then with a few stones they shovel in the excavated earth. For a man two stones, nasajeb, are raised above the grave, one for a woman. One and a half megidije ($ 1.35) is paid to the grave-digger for this work. In the inner desert a grave about twenty-five centimeters deep is dug